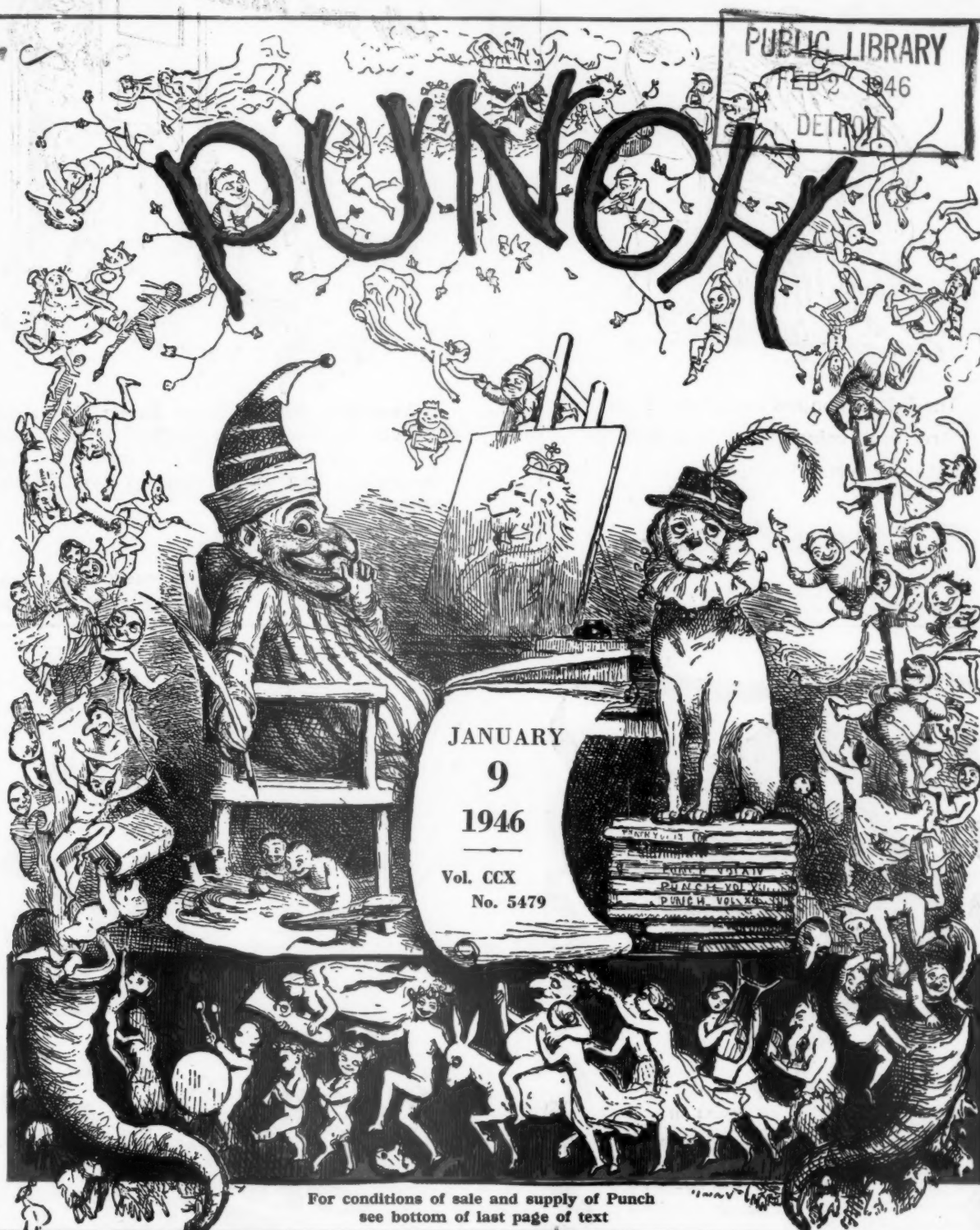


# DUNLOP backs Britain's recovery

5H/177



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch  
see bottom of last page of text

Fit **Triplex**—and be safe  
Regd



The British lion has always stood fast,  
'true to its colours' . . . . like Sundour  
unfading furnishing fabrics

**Sundour**

6

*'Jolly good biscuits!'*



Children always welcome Weston Biscuits. It is a natural desire for energy-giving food in a form that surely awakens appetite; and the Weston way of making and baking ensures the finest results from the finest ingredients obtainable.

**Weston**

A favourite choice to-day is  
Weston Rich Digestive, 114d. a pound



Specially prepared by  
Abdulla for all lovers of  
the American style cigarette.

Fifth Avenue . 20 for 2/4

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**Sharps**

SPECIALISE  
IN TOFFEE-



*'We specialise in'*  
**Sharps**  
**Toffee**



"IT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF"

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APPETITE is the best sauce, they say! If you lack it, Yorkshire Relish gives it. If you have it, you get double enjoyment with Yorkshire Relish. Its rich fruity flavour makes meals more tasty.

### FOR A NEW TASTE IDEA

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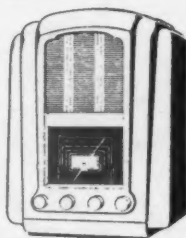
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*...but I've got a tin of NESCAFÉ!*



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**NESCAFÉ IS A SOLUBLE COFFEE PRODUCT**  
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FULL FASHIONED STOCKINGS



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Bacon Curers to H.M. King George VI  
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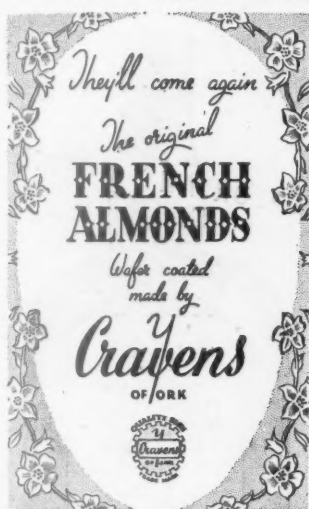
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THE  
CONNOISSEUR  
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STILL HARD TO GET  
BECAUSE IT'S  
STILL THE BEST



*The toothbrush  
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BRISTLES 2/- Plus Purchase Tax 5d.  
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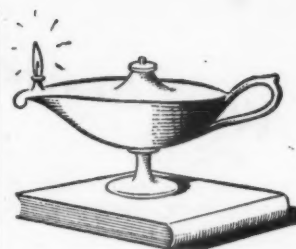
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state of medical  
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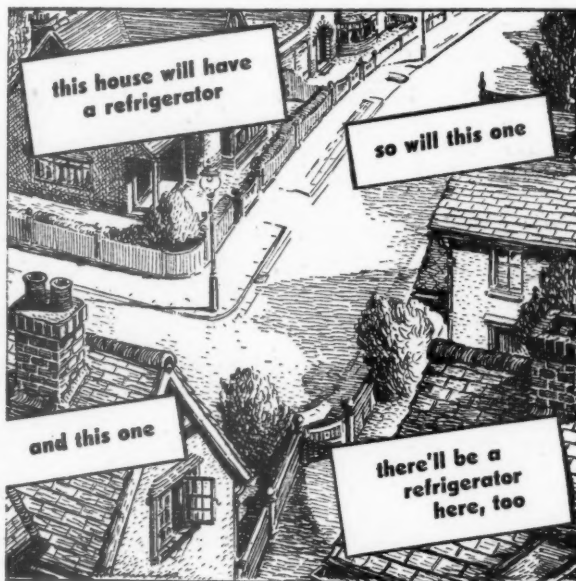
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RAZOR BLADE  
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It's better to use  
**RODINE**  
and have NO  
7½d. & 1/3 FROM YOUR CHEMIST. **RATS**  
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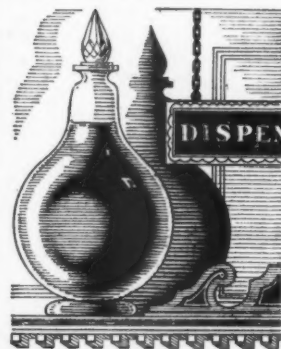
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**PRESTCOLD** will make refrigeration  
an every-household word



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Ask your chemist's opinion of

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TOOTH PASTE

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Time and again mothers have found that KEPLER makes a world of difference to a child's progress during the difficult winter months. Our winters are always "tricky"—what with the weather, and so many colds and illnesses about. Children need something *extra* if they are to keep really sturdy, and KEPLER is exactly what they require. KEPLER gives children *generous quantities* of the important protective vitamins (A and D). At 3/3d. and 5/9., KEPLER costs a little more—but a child's health is worth the extra. Get KEPLER today!



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**'KEPLER'**

COD LIVER OIL WITH MALT EXTRACT

Made from the purest cod liver oil and malt extract, one fluid ounce of KEPLER provides not less than 3,500 Int. Units of Vitamin A and 500 Int. Units of Vitamin D.

BURROUGHS WELLCOME & CO. LONDON.

We still can't give you as much film as you want, the reason being labour shortage. But we're trying hard, and the best film ever made should soon be yours for the asking.

Meanwhile please grant us your kind forbearance.

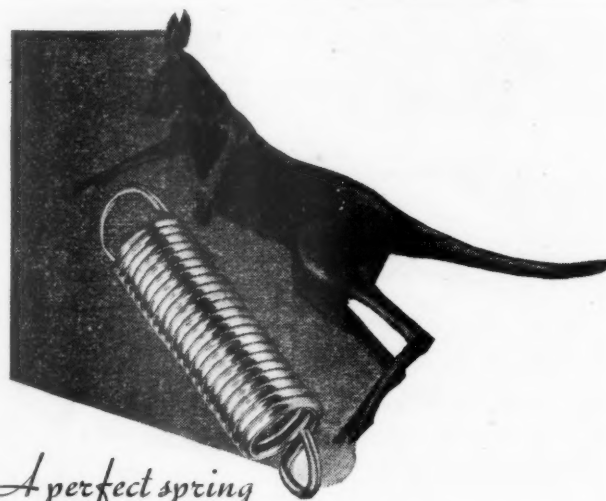
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Easily, gracefully, the kangaroo lollops along. In mechanics this kind of energy is usually released by means of springs. In fact one cannot imagine modern civilisation without them. Press an electric switch, turn a door handle, start a car, wind a clock—all these, and countless other things, depend on spring action. And the most efficient springs are those designed, made and tested by Terry's of Redditch. Their 90 years' specialised experience is at your disposal.

take your spring problems  
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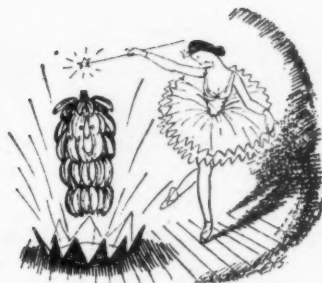
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# PUNCH

Or

The London Charivari



Vol. CCX No. 5479

January 9 1946

## Charivaria

SALVAGE officials ask us to thank those people who made their good resolutions early for the New Year and thus staggered the rush of breakages.

It is denied that a burglar who recently broke into the Ministry of Information was handed over to the police marked "Not to be released before Friday."



### Bedtime Story

"Maeterlinck wrote the story of Pallas and Melisande."  
Schoolgirl's essay.

At an Essex coastal town sea-gulls swoop down and seize sprats from the slab in a fishmonger's shop. Apparently they don't want to get their feet wet.

Ensa is being demobilized. Jokes will return to civilian life according to their age groups.

"SMOOTH WORKING AT POST OFFICE  
BIG DROP IN PARCELS"

"Working News and Mail."

So long as they land right side up.

A City business-man and his wife complained to the police that they had been held up in their front room by an unarmed intruder. We understand, however, that the man apologized later for not having a revolver.

Progressive scientists are now hard at work trying to discover a sound that travels faster than aeroplanes.

"PRAGUE, Wednesday.—Mr. Churchill will visit Czechoslovakia before or after he visits America next month, it is reported authoritatively today.—A.P."—"Daily Express."

Mr. Churchill will not visit Czechoslovakia whilst in America.—(Official.)

A paragraphist mentions that he has seen his first plumber of the season rushing to repair a leak. It may be a this year's plumber but we'll wager it was a last year's leak.

A sports writer advises punters to back horses which will stay. With bookmakers who will do the same.



We understand that the object of a recent police comb-out was to detect soldiers with forged military papers who had deserted from civilian life for the rations.

Ministry of Agriculture officials are beginning to fear that unless special priority is granted them the paper shortage may threaten the current year's harvest.

So serious has the epidemic of jewel thefts become that Hatton Garden merchants are now said to be travelling to and from the City in convoys.





## Notes on Nothing

"SIR,—Violets are blooming in my garden as I write. In fact the faster I write, the faster they seem to bloom. Both the primula and the auricula are in full flower, and the little galanthus nivalis is peeping shyly from the sod. Yesterday, on the southern bank, I saw a Purple Admiral, and from a neighbouring copse heard the first cry of the woodfinch. At midday the heat was almost unsupportable, and in the afternoon my wife and I gathered a peck of strawberries and half a pound of apricots. Is this unique?"

Unhappily no. When the people of London are standing in fish queues and flapping their fin-like arms to keep themselves warm, when ear-muffs and respirators are being worn by the wise, when it is necessary to smoke continuously in order to protect the nose from frost-bite, when the wretched gas-jet of the geyser barely thaws the icicles that depend from the bath-tap, and the coffee is cold before it reaches the chapped and trembling lips, that letter, or something like it, is always being printed in the Metropolitan newspapers. I believe it to be a black-hearted lie. The writer knows that some hoary tradition compels newspapers to publish this foolish nonsense at the turn of the year, and he likes to see his miserable words in print. No violets have bloomed in his unspeakable beds. Nothing peers coyly at him from the sod. There is no woodfinch in his abominable copse. He would not recognize a Purple Admiral if he saw one. He has not the faintest idea how many pints there are in a peck, and his garden, like mine, is a mess of nasty muck, with lime strewn all over it, and a few broken flower-pots in one corner. What is more, the proper name for the auricula is bear's ear.

Letters of this kind should be prohibited by law. Any man who has the audacity to state publicly that he has been gathering strawberries in January should be sent for eight months to an approved refrigerator. I try to take a lenient view of our life and times, but in the case of a letter of this sort I am adamant.

People should not go and look at pictures. At least they should not go and look at pictures they dislike. The artist paints what he sees; if he sees lines, patterns, colours, visions, dreams and subconscious phantasms where the ordinary person would have seen nothing but a lump of assorted scenery, or a woman with a plain face, that's the artist's internal trouble, not ours. Hardly anyone in London seems to realize how amazingly easy it is, in the present shortage of taxicabs, and overcrowding of buses and tubes to avoid seeing any exhibitions of painting or drawing at all.

As it is, I gather that crowds of honest folk who never worry, in the ordinary way, whether anyone is painting pictures or not, suffer amazing hardships in order to protest at the work of artists of whom they never heard until a few weeks ago.

Would they stamp on each other's toes and hang on straps for an hour in order to read the writings of a poet whom they can't understand, and then make a fuss about it afterwards?

To escape the cold in Trafalgar Square I went to look at some pictures the other day with a friend. He stopped before one arrangement and said "There you are! Bolshevism at its worst. People are quite right to howl at it."

"They've had a long time to howl," I told him, my eyes

glued, as ever, to the catalogue. "It seems to have been painted just after the Boer War."

Bread-eaters who are disturbed about the quality of English bread should try it out on the birds. After long experiments with a bird-table, I have discovered:

1. That blackbirds prefer ribo-flavin.
2. Sparrows will only eat bread in which 80 per cent. of the wheat husk and wheat kernel have been ground with the flour.
3. When she is fearfully hungry the hen blackbird gives her husband a fearful welt in the neck with her beak, and drives him off the platform.
4. The blue-tit and the robin, while admitting with reluctance the necessity of the wholemeal loaf, prefer the best flour obtainable, based upon our present knowledge of nutrition and milling technique. I always give all my bread to the birds.

Hitler is dead. A long time ago, I bet half-a-crown that he would not be caught alive, and though I have not yet collected the money, I consider that it is overdue. Hitler was not married. Or if he was, it doesn't matter. You cannot make a romance out of Hitler's private life by finding a lot of ink smudges on a page and calling them his marriage certificate. He had no instinct for domesticity as Nero or Henry VIII had. He was, by instinct and temperament, a homicidal maniac with a preference for a quiet life in the home. Hitler had no son. The child which has been discovered and lost was the second-cousin of Bormann's niece, and never expected to have his photograph reproduced in the English Press.

He is very like Bormann, except that Bormann has no head. Goering's step-son is also very like Goering, but stouter, and slightly older. It is not my fault.

But I have been reading a very interesting English paper called *The Vanguard*. It attacks with equal and sustained vehemence the Jews, the Americans, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Russians. There is a cartoon on the cover showing a Jew with a whip curled into the shape of a dollar beating the bowed figure of Labour, while a Conservative licks one of his boots, and a Liberal kneels fawning behind. It claims to be in its fifteenth year. In the current issue it writes:

"The 'master-criminals' in Germany are being tried and dealt with because they went to war with Poland. But when are the British 'master-criminals,' who declared war against Germany for ulterior purposes, to be tried?"

This is a monthly publication. It does not appear to hold Fascist views. It is simply Protestant. It is printed in the north of this island, and must have had some fun with the Censor during the last six years. One is bound to suppose that the editor is a man singularly indifferent to personal danger. But he seems to know what he wants anyhow.

### HOME HINT

The holly used for Christmas decorations should have been taken down on Twelfth Night and placed in the boiler. It burns with a bright crackling flame, and, if you had had enough of it, would have saved at least a teaspoonful of coke.

EVOE.



APRÈS LA GUERRE

"How nice to think that nothing can happen to-night!"



"It must have been dark down here in the black-out!"

### Short Wave

"MY dear Assistant Commissioner," I said, settling myself comfortably into a large arm-chair. "I knew you would send for me."

"Have a cigar."

"I was coming to that," I said, taking a couple of big ones from the box on his desk.

"Now you are probably aware——"

"Fully. The first thing I would say is you mustn't let this crime-wave get you down. It is one of the minor scars of war, and will heal quickly. Provided of course you do what I tell you. Have you the Home Secretary in your pocket?"

"Oh, I shouldn't say that," he said, nervously smoothing out a slight bulge in his well-cut coat. "I need hardly tell you we shall be very glad——"

"Naturally, naturally," I murmured, blowing a thick jet of smoke at the handsome portrait of Crippen which hung behind him, in oils. "I assume we are agreed that so-called modern methods are beside the point? V.H.F. cars and chaps with double-firsts making *fricassées* with portions of suspected toenail are all very impressive in their way, but what is clearly needed here is something bold and original. The public are a little restive at having their ducks pinched and their cars snooped and their earrings spirited away. We want to lay these thugs by the heels quickly."

"That would be delightful," said the Assistant Commissioner coldly, "but——"

"It's perfectly simple," I told him, throwing away the first cigar, which had been tested for finger-prints once

too often, "if we adopt two new principles, both well tried in other spheres. One is Decoy and the other is Discomfiture."

"You don't want to start hanging up paste tiaras in public libraries?" he asked miserably.

"Please consider the following abstract case of a citizen named Fishgut. Finding his house too big, as many people are finding their houses, if they have them at all, Fishgut decides to get rid of it. But first he must dispose of his large collection of antiques, and a sale is announced in the Press for a fortnight ahead. In the interval poor Fishgut, worn out with arrangements, shuts his house and goes off for a brief holiday. What does he find on his return?"

"Nothing," said the Assistant Commissioner with conviction. "Absolutely



nothing, except perhaps the nutmeg grater and the dust-bin. Fishgut is asking for it."

"Exactly. Now suppose that when Fishgut goes off—with plenty of publicity, by the way, taxis waiting at the door and notes pinned up to milkmen—a small posse of muscular young men is secreted by night in the air-raid shelter. They might have to wait a day or two, but inevitably there will be callers. They have only to let these callers get well enmeshed in the Chippendale and they are in the bag—a whole gang at a time."

"How do you suppose we should persuade enough householders selling up to go away just before the sale?"

"We shouldn't. We should advertise a series of bogus sales, to be cancelled later, at carefully selected points all over the country. The whole thing would be planned and timed as one major operation. You would have to take the Press into your confidence, but you have often done that."

"But where would the sales be scheduled to take place?"

"You would rent empty houses for the occasion, and also approach specially trusty householders. Some

would help for the fun of putting the wicked uncles inside and some for the substantial fees newspapers would pay for the privilege of planting a special correspondent."

"Have another cigar," muttered the Assistant Commissioner weakly.

"I think I will," I said, filling my pockets. "That deals with the material problem of capture. Now for the psychological side. You have got to turn on a maximum of mortification. You have got to revive the stocks."

"The stocks?"

"You 'eard. There is much to be said for them as a public tonic. In the old days people benefited greatly by an opportunity of studying their social enemies at close quarters. At present when an inconsiderate brute kicks an old lady downstairs or clears a farmer's yard of poultry he knows that at the worst he will go to a nice steam-heated prison with kind visitors and interesting books. If that were to be preceded as a matter of course by a week on a village green or at some busy tram junction he would think twice."

"My dear fellow, the House—"

"Here is the draft of a Bill for the Greater Discomfiture of Certain

Apprehended Persons. It must be whistled through. And while we are on the subject of the House you must also arrange for an amendment to the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, to allow for the setting of man-traps in decoy motor-cars. My solicitors—"

"If I might interrupt," cried the Assistant Commissioner, taking up his pencil vigorously, "who are your solicitors?"

"Beeswax, Beeswax and Jones. All three. None better. They tell me that man-traps—"

"My good sir, you can't go smashing our criminals' legs!"

"I understand there is some such aversion. What is therefore needed is a utility non-fracturing trap which will fit on to the pedals of a car. One would have to be laid on the Table of the House, and if none of the Opposition got their feet caught within three weeks—"

At this point a small posse of muscular young men arrived, and the interview ended. The fact that it all turned out to be a dream certainly leaves me short of cigars but in no way detracts from its undoubted interest.

ERIC.

## Fortissimo!

UNDER the stars, or in rain, as I wait in the queue for my bus,  
Uplifted, exultant, and strangely aloof from the crowd,  
Still haunting my brain is the music and, blending with it,  
The lingering tingling of palms, right and left, of my hands,  
Which have beaten together again and again at the close  
Of each symphony, rhapsody, aria, fugue, and concerto.

I am ever the first in applauding, asserting that none  
Is so prompt in appraisal as I.  
Again and again it is I, in the midst of the thousands,  
'Tis I who am first to acclaim, first to show  
That I know a good thing when I hear it.

Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Handel, Rachmaninoff,  
Mendelssohn, Chopin, Vaughan Williams, Rossini,  
And Dvorak—it's great, saying "Vor-zhak"  
(Like Wireless announcers)—  
Berlioz, Borodin, Schubert, Sibelius,  
Delius, Wagner, Mascagni, and Liszt,  
Bizet, Debussy, Bach, and the rest.  
Oh, the grand names of them!

In my brain and around me, like bees at their business,  
Crotchets, minims and quavers, all-luminous, trembling,  
Must surely be visible.  
My whole being's aglow with memory of melody,  
Of percussion of palm upon palm still vibrating.

When I stand in the Hall, gazing raptly at phalanx  
Of fiddles, drums, trombones, cymbals and piccolos,  
Flutes, oboes, 'cellos, trumpets, bassoons,

Horns, harps, and the organ;  
Impatient, agog for the climax, I love every bit of it.

And ere the last ravishing cadence has ended,  
Ere ever the roll of the drums has ceased rumbling  
My palms crash together. Again I am first.  
Yet not always (I frankly admit it), for sometimes (though rarely)  
Some other keen spirit is quicker than I,  
And I'm beaten by fraction of second.

But what joy in the tumult!  
Naught else can be heard save a shout here and there of  
exultance unbounded.

I look round me, meet glances responsive, and oftentimes a  
grin.

Here and there a mouth opens in speech to a neighbour,  
Unheard and unanswered save by a smile.  
'Tis ever the moment I wait for, insistent  
That none is devouter than I in my worship;  
And five or six times in an evening I have it.

Each riot of clapping goes on for a minute, or more.  
And sometimes at bow from conductor, and oft when a  
singer

Returns to the platform acknowledging tribute,  
The din is renewed. I care not how often!

Thus my worship's enriched by a personal ritual.  
And I care not who knows it, I'm proud,  
As under the stars, or as often as not in the rain,  
I wait in the queue for my bus.

## Late Night Thoughts

I AM alone in a railway-carriage at 11.52 P.M., after an entertainment at which the food has been excellent and not unaccompanied by draughts of the true, the blushful Hippocrene. The carriage is numbered 9222G. I do not mind that particularly. 9222 is quite a good number as numbers go. But why G? Carriages in which I travel are as a rule lettered H, or sometimes J. Not G. Still, I am broadminded to-night. I can quite see, now that my feet are up on the opposite seat, that things cannot be quite the same after six years of war. If they want to put G on their carriages, let 'em, that's all.

DURING BLACK-OUT—  
BLINDS MUST BE KEPT DOWN.  
BEFORE YOU ALIGHT—make certain the  
train is at the platform and that you alight on  
the platform side.

They haven't taken that down, you see, because half of it still applies. Just because the war's over we don't all want to start clambering out of the wrong side of the train half-way between Clapham Junction and Wandsworth, do we? It just shows how right the Government is not to scrap all the rules and regulations straight off. *Festina lente*. Gradually does it. There! my feet have slipped off the seat again.

VAUXHALL, by the way, has more notices saying VAUXHALL than any other station in England. I counted twenty-two of them once without moving my head. But I shan't do it to-night; the windows are steamed up for one thing. Tennyson wrote a poem on a young lady seen at Vauxhall, but he doesn't say whether her stays were creaking. He wouldn't have heard them I dare say, with all the trains.

### IF DANGER SEEMS IMMINENT, LIE ON THE FLOOR.

No, no. I shall be all right. Just a moment of giddiness when my feet fell off again. That sweet was pretty rich. One isn't used to all that cream of course. Where do they get it? Eh? That's what I want to know.

All this stuff about flying glass is getting me down. It ought to be removed. Flying glass has had its day. The splendour falls on castle walls—no, that isn't what I meant. I meant something else. All the same I'd rather have written that line than have taken Quebec. Not that I have taken Quebec, or am ever likely to as far as I can see.

Do you know, I couldn't storm the heights of Abraham at this moment if you were to offer me a hundred thousand pounds free of income tax.

Queen's Road, Battersea! What in the name of fortune do we want to stop at Queen's Road, Battersea, for? Nobody ever gets in or out at this benighted place. Of fifty-six G.I. brides asked whether they had ever got in or out at Queen's Road, Battersea, forty-eight said no, seven said don't know, and the remainder said she had been there once for a holiday in August. I shall write to the Company and tell them they are wasting their time.

There, we are off again, and so are my feet—an instance of Zeugma, or possibly anacoluthon. I shall try lying full-length on the opposite seat. Then I shan't be able to see that offensive thing about flying glass.

### ALL NECESSARY LIGHTS will be switched off in the event of an Air Raid warning.

What they mean is that all unnecessary lights will be switched off. At least, no. What they are trying to say is that all lights that might show, all lights it is necessary to switch off, in other words, will be switched off. In that case why bother with the black-out? It simply makes a mockery of the whole business. I had better put my hat over my eyes, I think.

NOT stopping at Wandsworth! To stop at a place like Queen's Road, Battersea, and not to stop at Wandsworth seems to me an act of the purest lunacy. Wandsworth, with its gas-works and Civic Centre and so on. It is practically Vandalism. Not that I want to get out at Wandsworth, but still. Somebody might. I bet they won't try this sort of thing on when they're nationalized. Otherwise out goes the Government candidate for Wandsworth in a twinkling.

Good old Putney! They say you can get a taxi at Putney, but I doubt it. Not at nine minutes past midnight with the thermometer standing where it stands to-day. I shall stick to 9222G to the bitter end. The walk will do me good. I may even sing.

So. The train is at the platform. I have made certain of that. It only remains for me to alight on the platform side and all will be well. I am at liberty to touch any outside part of the coach since, so far as I am aware, no gas attack is suspected.

I am out. It was as easy as pie. I have my ticket ready and I present it with a courteous good-night to the young lady. Can she be the young lady Tennyson saw further up the line? Ridiculous. A daughter? It seems improbable. However that may be, she hands my ticket back. Is it out of date, or what? I ask her, and she replies brusquely that I must be the judge of that. I look at my ticket again and find it is a photograph of my godson aged three. I have as a matter of fact been spending the evening in conference with my co-godfather, but it does not seem worth while pointing that out to the young lady.

In any case it is a mistake that might easily happen to anyone with a godson of that age. All the same, I am upset. I stammer. I am positively blushful.

It must be the Hippocrene.

H. F. E.

## Our Christmas Post

WE used to get our post on Christmas Day in the South of Ireland, the same as all other great nations, but that is a thing of the past; and this is how it became a thing of the past, as I have it from one who has a way of gathering information as a great swamp will gather the water of the surrounding hills. "It happened like this," my informant said: "We always had a delivery on Christmas Day, but, sure, it's better the way it is. It happened in Drumahooley, and maybe in a lot of other places besides, but it was because of what happened in Drumahooley that the decision was made, and we lost our Christmas post, and maybe it's as well. It happened like this: Mickey Doolan, over beyont, was postman then, as he is now. Sure, you know him. Well, on Christmas morning, only a few years ago, he sets out on his bicycle with his post-bag, and he comes first to

the house of Jimmy O'Donohue, and he says to him, 'I have a letter for the both of you.'

"'God save you,' says Jimmy, 'and won't you have a drink?'

"Well, Mickey takes the drink, seeing no harm in it, and why would there be on Christmas Day? And he goes on to the next house. And at the next he hands in his letters, and they offers him a drink, same as anyone would, getting his letters at Christmas. And Mickey says, 'I'm just after having one.'

"And they says to him, 'What's one?'

"And, sure, Mickey takes the drink. Well, on he goes to the next house, and that was the house of O'Rory, and glad O'Rory was to get a letter, for he hadn't had one for a year, and it was Christmas Day, as I said. And he shouts out to Mickey, 'Mickey have a drink.'

"And Mickey says, 'I'm just after having one with Brian O'Lynch.' And they were in a narrow lane with high banks, and O'Rory, who is a terrible great man, was standing outside his door, and he says, 'No man that takes a drink from Brian O'Lynch, and not from me, leaves this bohieren alive.'

"Sure, it would have looked like a slight to him. Wasn't he right? So Mickey has his drink and he goes on. And the next house he comes to with the Christmas mail he is offered a drink again, and he says to himself, 'The people that live along this bohieren are a contrairy sort of people, and maybe I had better not offend them.' So he has a drink and goes on. And the lane gets longer and longer. And the longer it gets the more houses there are in it. And Mickey says to himself, 'I always heard that it's a long lane that has no turning, but this lane goes on for ever, and not a turn in it anywhere.' And a Christmas letter, mind you, for every house, and a drink for Mickey. Well it all came from there being an old couple named Rabbits, Cornelius and Biddy Rabbits, and there was a letter for each of them, or maybe cards; Mickey isn't clear which, and, sure, it doesn't matter. And he has his drink and goes on, and he gets the idea that it isn't the end of the lane, which it is, and nothing beyond only the bog, and an old bank straggling down to it covered with bracken, and a row of rabbit-holes all along it that the rabbits had dug where it was soft, for the bog was beginning there. And Mickey goes on, leading his bicycle as well as he can, still thinking the lane hasn't ended and that it is full of houses, and the Christmas mail gets heavier on him as the land gets boggy, and Mickey gets more and more tired. Well, you know the way one idea will run in your head when you're tired. It was like that with Mickey; and the idea was that he still had letters, or cards, whichever it was, to deliver to Mr. and Mrs. Rabbit. And the tired

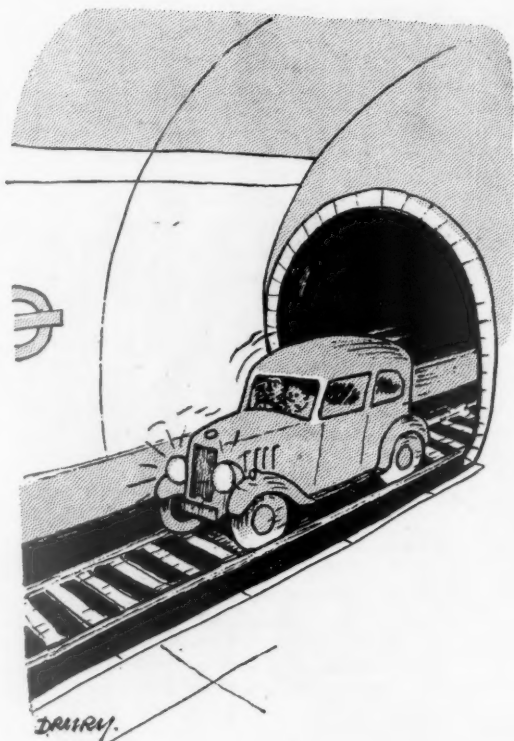


*"Now that there's no war on, Colonel, do you still have to spend a lot of time polishing up your buttons?"*

he gets, pushing the bicycle over the boggy land, the more the idea worries him, the idea that the lane goes on for ever, and the row of houses with it. And he goes on delivering the mail, until at last it feels lighter, and he gets to the bog and can get no further, and then he goes to sleep. There was some sort of trouble made by a few cantankerous persons about letters they were expecting, but it would have all blown over, only that there's an important politician living in Drumahooley, one of the finest in Europe, and he started having inquiries made; and the bulk of the Christmas mail was found in the rabbit-holes in the bank going down to the bog, and he didn't like it. And it was to please him that we have lost our Christmas delivery."

ANON.





"... I believe the fog's clearing up a little, old man."

## The Coming of Walt

(It is announced that Mr. Walt Disney will shortly pay us a visit, and will be accompanied by a team.)

WALT, the great Walt, most eminent of Disneys,  
To-day provides my theme.  
Soon will he land upon this shore  
And bring, what's more,  
His interesting team,  
On pleasure bent combined no doubt with bizniz.  
Methinks I see  
The great ship slide along the quay.  
Observe, I beg, the crowds, the ready bands.  
Down with the gangway quick.  
'Tis done in half a tick,  
And Mr. Disney lands.

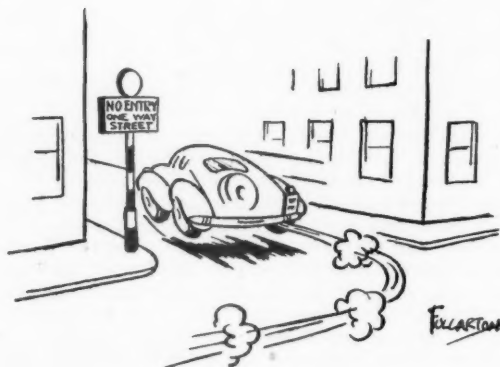
First of the team whom England throngs to greet  
Drawn from their long retreat  
Come Mickey and his Min.  
Happy, happy, happy pair.  
None but the brave,  
None but the brave,  
None but the brave deserve the fair,  
And why I shove that in  
I'm not aware.

Down the long slope with mincing step they pass  
(Bang, drums, and bellow, brass).  
Welcome them, crowds, with loud chi-hike.  
Mickey and Min are with us. This is something like.

Follows a stream  
Of lesser members of the team:  
A fawn with pleading eyne,  
And tearful rabbit. Flapping ears like wings  
Dumbo is here, and penguins all in line.  
And several other things  
Whom I can't name  
Press to the shore with general acclaim.  
Now Pluto comes, engaging hound,  
With curious ears and speaking tail,  
Snuffling with nose to ground  
Who knows what scent and what peculiar trail.

But who is this with voice enough for ten  
Emitting coloratura  
(What poise and what bravura),  
'Tis she, none other, the soprano Hen.  
What rare technique is hers,  
Each cluck how round and clear,  
None of your ill-joined registers  
Nor any breathings here.  
The bands are silent. Not a note is heard.  
The moment that she starts  
They realize they haven't got the parts  
And, leaning back, commit it to the bird.

Now, ev'n as she achieves her last high cluck,  
Breaking the customary pause  
Desired for her well-merited applause,  
Queering her wrathful pitch  
(A lot he cares for sich)  
Quackering he comes. 'Tis Donald, Donald Duck.  
Alone, aloof he stands  
And glares with baleful eye upon the bands.  
Blare, brass, and rattle, drums, your loudest beat;  
Flatter his high conceit.  
With full tumultuous cheers  
Assail, O crowds, his contumacious ears.  
'Tis done. His chest expands,  
And, with cocked cap, in triumph Donald lands.  
DUM-DUM.



"Tut, tut—there goes my New Year's resolution."

## Table-Talk of Amos Intolerable

XXIII

THE recent fuss about Matisse and Picasso, and the even more recent screeches about Paul Klee, remind me of some profound remarks made by Amos about the fairy-tale "The Emperor's New Clothes," which he holds to be at the root of all such fulminations.

"The trouble is that the hero of that celebrated story," he said, "the centre of attraction, the cynosure, the focus of implied approval, is that odious and complacent little boy who pointed out that the Emperor had nothing on; and there is a popular impression that in what seems to be a similar situation all the average chump has to do to win universal good opinions is to state what seems to be the obvious with similar artlessness, absolutely no brains required. This might be all very well if it *were* a similar situation, and if what seems to the average chump to be the obvious had even a remote chance of being admitted to be true by everybody else; but it practically never is, and it never has. Thus in all these art arguments the indignant traditionalists, and the average chumps who instinctively side with them, are not merely upset by what they call modernist monstrosities; their exasperation is increased ten thousand times by the fact that hardly anybody seems to realize the respect and deference due to persons setting themselves up in the rôle of the complacent small boy."

"Do we understand you to suggest," somebody asked, "that there *were* some clothes on the Emperor?"

Amos replied "I see no reason why not. All we are told is that everybody immediately agreed with the small boy when he irresponsibly said there weren't—everybody who a minute before had been firmly convinced of the opposite. Talk about a lunatic fringe!"

"It entertains me," said Amos, "to watch the contortions of writers who refuse to admit the truth that a simile or a comparison is as perishable, instant and irrevocable as a struck match."

We regarded him with suspicion as he looked about. At last he went on: "For instance, a favourite device with a writer who wants to repeat what he considers an effective comparison is to say, quite inaccurately, or at least merely for the sake of saying it and without any conscious meaning, that this time it is *more true than ever*. The first time, he says of some character that he looks like a snail in spectacles, and then when the character shows up in the story again he can't trust the reader to remember this and he can't be bothered to invent a new visual image, but he wants to do his best to keep out of the *New Yorker's* Infatuation With Sound of Own Words Department, so he airily proclaims that this time the character looks 'more like a snail in spectacles than ever.' Now certainly he doesn't really mean this. The second time, the comparison is . . ." He paused.

One of the company put his hand up like a schoolboy and piped "I know! More like a struck match than ever!"

Amos looked at him sourly and said he had been about to say "pointless."

After staring for some moments at a little episode proceeding out of earshot at the other end of the bar, Amos observed "Subtle though the difference is, I am inclined to believe that among characters who seem to

have reached comfortable psychological adjustment the man who counts his change while flirting with the barmaid is on the whole a slightly more acceptable person than the man who flirts with the barmaid while he counts his change."

In the course of talk about an overbearing American Amos said that he had known Americans who would not have said "Say, bo" to a goose, and paused. Somebody observed "That crack has been made before."

After a moment of appearing to be affronted, Amos said "Not by me. And obviously not with enough emphasis." A little later he added "And on second thoughts I'm not keen on it anyway. It seems dated. To make it stamps one as a member of the older and more out-of-touch generation that believes Americans *say* 'Say, bo.'"

When the silence after this seemed to be on the edge of being broken he suddenly looked up sharply and snapped, with the air of one who skilfully parries a thrust, "The crack about sour grapes has been made before, too."

When an inoffensive little man who had somehow contrived to arouse Amos's annoyance cried in a very loud determined tone "Over my dead body!" Amos assumed an expression of unnatural brightness and pleasure, leaned forward, and said eagerly "How soon?" R. M.



"No Forces Favourites programme would of course be complete without the inevitable nine out of ten records by Bing Crosby."



"... and not ONLY did it cost a quarter of a million, but they say it took TWENTY-THREE years to make."

## The Birth of Language

HOW near his sire's careering fires  
Does Mercury the planet run,  
What wave of heat must lave  
and beat  
That shining suburb of the Sun!

His burning flings supernal things  
Like spindrift from his stormy crown,  
He throws and shakes in rosy flakes  
Intelligible virtues down.

And landing there in candent air  
They muster thick as bees that swarm;  
And each assumes both speech and  
plumes  
And sandals wing'd and godlike form.

Due West—the sun's behest so runs—  
They seek the wood where flames are  
trees.

'Neath crimson shade their limbs are  
laid  
Beside the pure quicksilver seas;

Where thick with notes from liquid  
throats  
The forest melody leaps and runs,  
Till night lets robe the lightless globe  
With darkness and with distant suns.

Awake they spring and shake the wing  
And on the trees whose trunks are  
flames  
They find like fruits, with rind and roots  
And leaves of fire, their proper names.

At taste whereof with haste and love  
They soar straight up the night's abyss.  
(Far, far below the arbours glow  
Where first they knew Mercurial bliss).

They ache and freeze through vacant  
seas  
Of night. Their nimbleness and youth  
Turns lean and froze; their meaning  
more,  
Their being, less. Life shrinks to  
truth.

They reach this Earth, where each has  
birth  
Miraculous—a Word made breath;  
Lucid and small, of use for all  
Man's current need; and dry like  
death.

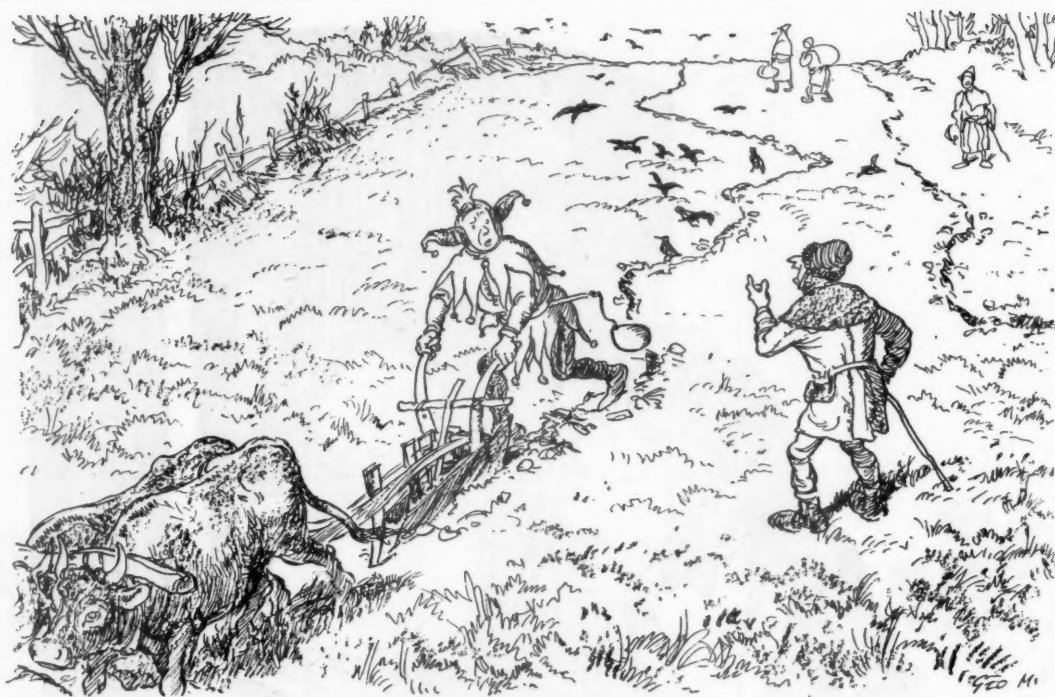
How dim below these symbols show,  
Bony and abstract every one!  
Yet if true verse once lift the curse  
They feel in dreams their native  
sun. N. W.





### UNO AND THE LION

"Table for two thousand? Certainly, Miss."



"No, I couldn't get my old job back."

## My Lifetime in Basic Industry

### VIII—Music in Scowle

THERE are many people who deem Nature careless and inequitable in her benefactions. Such people are ignorant apparently of Schwerpunkt's great work on the substance of Natural Law\*—in particular of his fifth law of compensation and betterment. In a dramatic passage Schwerpunkt points out that:

"the dog animal is low in stature so that its visual range, its effective horizon, is severely limited; but this dreadful handicap is mitigated by a compensating refinement of its olfactory organ. The dog animal is relatively myopic but has a keen sense of smell. The domestic bat is similarly handicapped but its tactile perception is remarkably sensitive. . . ."

I mention all this because I want to explain an important characteristic of the people of Scowle as I knew them some forty years ago. The isolation of their village and their preoccupation

with manual toil had robbed them of opportunities for literary expression. Few of them could speak more than a dozen or so monosyllables, and fewer still could write more than their own names. Yet how those people could sing! Singing was in their very blood. As a boy I used to imagine I could hear it murmuring and trilling from vein to artery, artery to vein. Their music was spontaneous, completely unorganized, and they were quite unaware of its superb quality.

I cannot help laughing when I compare the modern attitude to music with that of Scowle. Take this "Music While You Work" idea, for example. The miners of Scowle sang at their work not as an aid to efficiency but because they liked the acoustics of the Dribben seam. As a matter of fact they usually downed their picks the moment a song started up. The glorious sound would race from gallery to gallery, gathering volume as it went, until the whole company underground had joined in. It took several seconds

(the Dribben seam is 3,687 feet deep if you would like to work the thing out exactly) for the sound to ascend the upcast shaft where it would be taken up by the surface workers—screening and hauling. The great wheel over the Orange No. 2 Pit would whine to a standstill, the trucks would stop and production per man-hour and ordinary share dividends would begin to decline.

My grandfather Ebby once told me very proudly that the music of the underworld could be heard quite clearly by a man ten miles from Scowle if he pressed his ear close to the ground.

My mother's voice was one of the loudest in Scowle, and the number of gas-mantles destroyed by the vibrations it set up was a constant source of anxiety to my father. Her tone was pleasant enough but her vocal chords were unable to cope with the enormous pressure generated by her deep chest, so that the greater part of it emerged without being converted into sound and merely produced a muffled soughing accompaniment. She was at her

\*The Universe—Order or Chaos? By W. Stopforth Schwerpunkt

best perhaps in chapel on Sunday mornings. I used to sit next to her watching the pages of her hymn book whiffle before the storm of her vibrant contralto.

We had no choir at our chapel and no organ. We took our key-note and time from my grandfather Ebby. He would strike his tuning-fork against the pew-door, tap out two or three bars with his clog and lead off with a fine sweep of the arm. Old Ebby had a very pleasing voice and was one of the few people who sang the actual words of the hymns; the rest of the congregation made do with a repetitive "lah" or "hm."

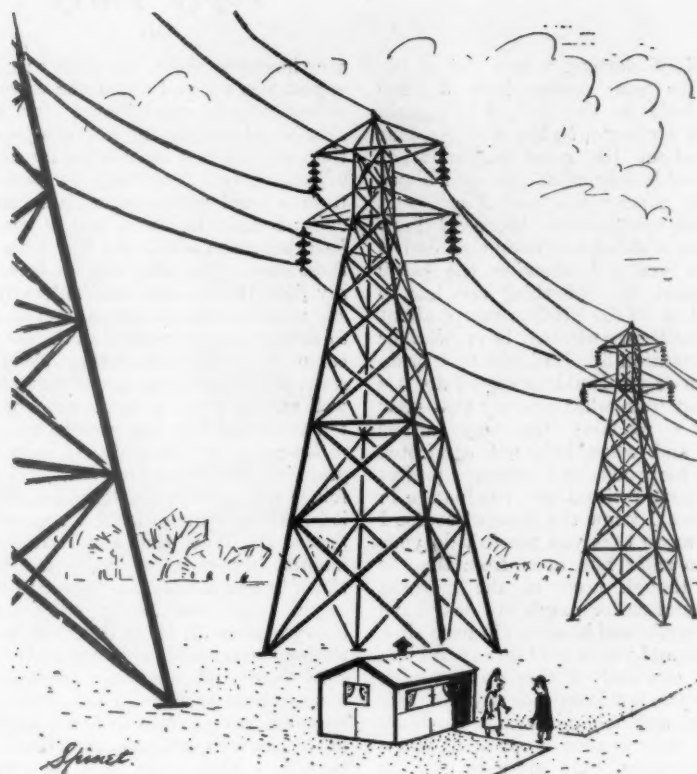
In 1904 Scowle was visited by the Bad Ogleheim "Meistersingers," one of the most famous of itinerant German bands. The Meistersingers had been acclaimed in London, but this was their first appearance in the Midlands, and a great crowd from neighbouring towns and villages assembled to greet them.

The Germans arrived in Scowle on the eve of the concert and were entertained in typical Scowle fashion. Each member of the band was received into the bosom of some miner's family and was given the very best in "lobby" or hot-pot, drink and linen. At our poor dwelling we had Herr Freismann, a bass singer. He was a man of immense girth and capacity.

The first sign of discord between Scowle and the Meistersingers was the premature closing, at seven o'clock that evening, of The Half-Nelson and the Scowle Arms. As the men on the afternoon shift came out-by from the Orange No. 2 Pit to find their wells of comfort run dry, low murmurings of disgust and disapproval were heard.

The concert took place in the Mission Hall before a record audience. I sat with my mother, my brother Caleb and my younger sister Madge right in front of the stage on a seat marked "Reserved for Scowle." The programme opened with a selection of songs by the Scowle Male Voice quartet conducted by my grandfather Ebby. The singing was good and the applause generous. Next came a selection of light operatic airs played by the German band and then a group of rag-time tunes sung by the Meistersingers. Each piece was accorded a tremendous ovation and the sweating Germans grinned from ear to ear.

I was watching old Ebby rather closely. With each burst of cheering his expression grew more and more glum. I looked at his compatriots on the stage, and then at the Scowle section of the audience: it was clear from their gathered brows and twisted smiles that the proceedings were



*"... and another advantage is we're not overlooked here."*

proving a grave disappointment. To see its own quartet eclipsed in this way was a new and bitter experience for the village.

At the interval bottles of precious beer were handed up from the auditorium to the Germans on the stage and Scowle's uneasy resentment developed into a smouldering hatred of foreigner and visitor alike.

For the last item on the programme the two quartets were to combine in the singing of "Drink Deep, Mariner Mine." I saw the men regroup themselves, throw out their chests and clasp their hands over their waistcoats. Then, quite suddenly, the silent, expectant Mission Hall was filled with uproar. I saw my grandfather Ebby in fierce altercation with the conductor of the German quartet. I saw the German snatch at the baton: I saw old Ebby snatch it back. Missiles began to fly. And then above the din a tremendous voice boomed out and everyone turned to look at Reuben Hunslett, the checkweighman. I do

not remember what he said in those few seconds but the word "spies" was repeated a number of times. Then all was confusion.

That night's work cost Scowle very dear. The smashed instruments had to be replaced of course, but much worse was the ridicule heaped on the village in the daily press. It took years to live that down. And yet I wonder . . .

HOD.

### *Cri de Cœur*

WITH an escort on whom I am keen  
To make an impression  
I behave like a fool  
And grovel and drool  
With a worshipping-spaniel expression.

When my escort is boring, my poise  
Never flags for a minute.  
I'm a roaring success  
When I couldn't care less:  
There's no future in it.



## Topsy Turvy

XIII

TRIX darling, a new rule of life for you, *always* keep a little *holly* in the hall, I'll explain why in a minute, by the way my dear *what* about the good *resolutions*, I noted sardonically what you said about making Henry join the *Rotary* and circulate a little more, because I don't suppose a *thing* has happened and if I were you I'd abandon the *entire* aspiration, for one thing one has to attend on *all* the Fridays except about *one*, and Henry will only be *expelled* for non-attention like Haddock was, or do I mean *as* yes Haddock says I do, it's *too* clear from what you say that your Henry's reaching the *ungregarious* stage and when he's not *squelching* about his woods and spinneys prefers to be *quite* reticent and ruminative in the *home*, I know the signs, of course I don't mean that you mustn't do your best to *make* him utter from time to time, though *never* at the morning meal, and as for *people* my dear have a few *sprigs* and blossoms in from time to time and you'll see him expand like a *rose*, especially if they go slow with the *Scotch*, but Rotary or anything like that no *definitely* no darling, Haddock by the way is already smoking like a *volcano* again, only more regular, in *spite* of the dollar area, and as for my *accounts*, well they began *meticulously*, but *what* a pest and martyrdom they

are, however about the *holly*, well I expect you've read about the wave of *delinquency* in our afflicted city, my dear *too* alarming, one day it's *jewels*, the next day it's cases of *tea* far more dejecting, and they took *57* turkeys from a local meatmonger, it's called *bulk-purchase* I believe, and of course *how* they flash about the city with all these *massive* ill-gotten cargoes, because my dear the *crowds*, one can scarcely *stir* with the merest *parcel*, and as for *57* turkeys, my dear *where* all the people come from and *where* they sleep is something I *definitely* can not envisage, well among them it seems are *exactly* ten thousand *deserters* who having no *ration-cards* are compelled to exist by grabbing diamonds, etcetera, I do not follow the reasoning utterly but there it is, my dear the other day the police *flooded* the West End and Haddock's identity things were scrutinized *four* times in half a mile, *too* thorough but as he said not *totally* convincing, because after all these deserters have to sleep *somewhere*, why not make the *most* loud and *alarming* pronouncements about *harbouring* deserters and let *no one* sleep a chap without examining a chap's *papers*, however I dare say there is a little more to it than *that*, and of course as Haddock says what with all the chaps having been in the Army where private property does not

exist and all the chaps at home being told that private property is a kind of *crime* invented by the wicked Tories, it's not too surprising to find the *sense of property* a shade *sluggish* here and there, though of course in the same circles the bestial *profit-motive* does seem to struggle along somewhat, anyhow my dear in liberated London now we all look under *all* the beds, especially of course my *hunted* Iodine Dale, Oh I forgot, I *did* tell you didn't I that she's working out the last months of her *decree nisi* and is *quite* satisfied that the *King's* Proctor is after her because of the *hooded* man who lurks under the lamp-post the *rocket* blasted, doesn't it all sound *too* macaber and moving, personally my dear I think she's bats, but what can you expect and there after an absent week or two he *definitely* is again, or someone *like* him, I've *implored* Haddock to *visit* the King's Proc and find out for certain if he has any *hounds* about, but Haddock says *if* the great *wheels* of Justice are in *fact* in motion it wouldn't be the done thing for a *Member* to poke the old nose in *much*, if *any*, meanwhile the poor victim is in *such* a state of *nisi-neurosis* she makes me open *all* her letters in case it's the King's Proc or somebody and will *not* open the front-door if it's to take in the *bread*, though *too* helpful in the home elsewhere, in fact a godsend, because my angelic Mrs. B. is *quite* distracted with all her family demobbed and *how* to feed them, well my dear *last* night I said to Haddock, *Take* the pathetic waif to the pictures or somewhere before we all have an attack of *battery*, I'll guard the fort, so off they went, and my dear feeling *noticeably* Christian because there have been moments when I *rather* fancied he was *rather* attracted, I thought it's at least the *Fourteenth* Night let's get the Christmas vegetation down, so after a *heroic* act with the step-ladder up the basement stairs I did the schoolroom and the hall, *beginning* with that barbarous *holly*, which they say this year is more lacerating than ever, *too* right, *quite* agony, well then my dear when half-way up the ladder to dismantle the mistletoe there's the *rudest* knock on the *front* door *three* feet away, my dear the little heart missed *seven* complete beats and then fell into the larger intestine, the *brain* however was working like a *rocket*, I thought Well it *may* be the King's Proc, or it *may* be one of the new *inspectors* about



"A plague on Emily and her Domestic Science Classes."



"Really, mother, if I can't say 'coo' OR 'blimey' civvy street's going to be a bit of a bind."

erroneous war-works or billetees, but intuition tells me it's a bandit, because you know darling sometimes you absolutely know you're right, well I thought the done thing is to ring up that magic number for the police and hold the bandit till they arrive, only could I remember the magic number, no, yes I know now it's 999 but all I could think of was Terminus 1234, so my dear I skunk into the schoolroom and dialled that which turns out to be the *Sunday Times*, well while I'm explaining to a baffled watchman or somebody there's another shattering knock at the door, and I think Let's face it after all it may be the Ministry of Health or carols, because my dear in these parts carols begin in November and go on till March, so I snatch up a bosomful of excruciating holly, turn the latch and scuttle back and up my ladder again, well my dear in at once comes the most scrofulous little man with his hat over his eyes and shuts the door, and he says very American, This is a hold-up, stick 'em up, well by this time believe it or not darling the little brain was working exactly like a

ball-bearing and I said That's no way to talk to a British matron under the mistletoe, to which he answered Cut it out swell dame are you Mrs. Elkinstone, so I said For that matter are you the Ministry of Health, and he said Are there any guys in the house, my dear believe me this is absolute verbatim, so I said Several, and I then perceived that the little vermin was trembling like an aspic-leaf, so I thought This is one of the amateur bandits, no more American than Stonehenge or me, so leaning gracefully over my ladder I caught him the most unfriendly slosh in the face with about five shillings' worth of holly, I then fell on top of him, ladder and all, my dear I'm nothing but scratches and bruises, but I was on top so I hollied him a little more till my dear he mewed for mercy, when leaving the body entangled in the ladder I darted to the phone and shouted Bandits, well of course I was still through to the *Sunday Times* man who was sweetly helpful and told me all about 999 which we arranged for him to ring but of course I'd hardly begun to give him

my address and everything when we were cruelly cut off, and by then the anæmic bandit had crawled to his feet and evaporated into the night, too disappointing but rather a triumph don't you think, though of course Haddock and me are scarcely speaking because he doesn't think it was a bandit at all but some sort of divorce detective, who thought it was a sage way to get evidence of any illicit man on the premises, who of course would rush to repel bandits but not the Ministry of Health, but then I said Why me, well it seems there was a Mrs. Elkinstone in these parts years ago, so probably it's some utter failure in the filing system, they've got the wrong address in the wrong Borough, and if so it means that my haunted Iodine has no more to fear from the hooded man, which is a big thing to the good, on the other hand Haddock says that for all we know I may have mangled one of the King's Proctor's men, which may be high treason or something, I must say I could hardly care less, farewell now your big bedridden bruise Topsy.

A. P. H.

## At the Play

### "ALADDIN" (CAMBRIDGE)

THIS is in the corner of the British playground which foreigners find the most incomprehensible of all. If it is for children, they ask politely, then why are some of the jokes ruder than they might have been and why is the auditorium packed with lone applauding adults? If on the other hand it is for adults, then why is so much of it palpably aimed at the nursery? Can it be a species of music-hall? Or a Freudian festival cleverly wrapped up in the way the British are so good at wrapping things? Or has it perhaps some religious significance which escapes them? It is none of these, we answer proudly, but a national institution rich in traditional but inexplicable symbolism designed for the delectation, elevation and recreation of elderly and older children, and they nod sadly and leave it at that. Poor foreigners.

These revels are along much the usual lines. They lack originality, but they seemed to please, and they have been mounted with a decent Yuletide regardlessness by Mr. EMILE LITTLER, who wrote, produced and presented them. Miss BINNIE HALE leads, as dashing and adventurous a son as the most ambitious washerwoman could wish for. She has verve and the essential trick of taking an audience into her confidence, and moreover she is ably backed up by two five-star goldfish named *Ike* and *Monty* (who says our commanders are not being properly recognized?). The *Widow Twankey*, whose laundry by the look of it is due for a visit from Sir Stafford Cripps, is taken by Mr. HAL BRYAN in a manner which leaves no doubt that hers is a large port-and-lemon. After her son's remarkable rise to fortune her changes of coiffe and costume are staggering, and the archness of her wink and the bar-shaking quality of her laugh are all they should be. Other old friends present include the massive *Emperor of China*, endowed by Mr. MARTIN LAWRENCE with a Wurlitzer

voice which appears to come out of his boots; *Wishee Washee*, still utterly incompetent as a laundry operative but happily keeping up with his dancing, thanks to Mr. JACK STANFORD; and of course the *Princess*, to whom Miss MARY MEREDITH gives the graces. That bad type *Abanazar* the sorcerer is as much to the front as ever, his career in crime well signposted by a reckless expenditure of gunpowder. N'GAI, who plays him, is stamped a graduate of the Magicians' Staff College and also does a little sword-swallowing.



"COR! THIS BEATS SHAKESPEARE!"

*Abanazar* . . . . . Mr. N'GAI  
*Aladdin* . . . . . Miss BINNIE HALE

There are also *Elstree's Three Stooges*, who work busily—I think rather too busily—to amuse us, the lissome *TILLER GIRLS* and the *TERRY CHILDREN*, very nimble. I should mention, too, a likeable cat claimed to contain Mr. LAURIE MELLIN, and a horse having the most expressive ears I can remember of any horse which can be said to have made its mark on our stage. It engulfs the AGAR YOUNG DUO, but which part of that resounding title is responsible for the management of the ears I have unfortunately no way of telling.

But for real artistry the outstanding event of the evening is the performance

of the GANJOU BROTHERS and JUANITA. This is too well-known to need description, but whenever one sees it one is struck afresh by the brilliant timing with which the graceful little JUANITA is slung around this muscular fraternity. Not many fighter-boys could stand up to the G's which she absorbs on some of her close turns, without blacking out. ERIC.

### "THE GLASS SLIPPER" (ST. JAMES'S)

THIS revival of HERBERT and ELEANOR FARJEON's adaptation of the *Cinderella* story makes me feel that here we have—alas, had in the case of HERBERT FARJEON—a children's play by two writers who really knew what they were about. There is not a trace of mawkishness or vulgarity, but instead wit and robust humour and a delightful fancy. If there is any doubt about its durability as an annual then the public is beyond hope.

Directed by Mr. ROBERT DONAT and Mr. STEPHEN THOMAS, it is full of good things. First of all, Miss SARA GREGORY's *Cinderella*. It is a big part, rich in opportunities, and she seizes them all with a naturalness and zest which are most refreshing. Her voice is pretty and, though not very big, big enough. That one should be moved and excited by a young girl unexpectedly going to a party is absurd, but moved and excited one is, and the honours are mainly Miss GREGORY's. Then there is Mr. GEOFFREY DUNN's *King's Herald*, a comic performance grandly conceived, and the *Step-mother* and *Horrid Sisters* of Miss ELSIE FRENCH, Miss JOAN STERNDALE BENNETT, and Miss OLGA MAY, each admirably contrasted. And though there is much else I should like to mention and cannot, I must, finally, record the beauty of the *Harlequinade*. It is exquisitely done, by Miss ANNETTE CHAPPELL and Mr. FRANK STAFF, and owes its choreography to Miss ANDRÉE HOWARD, its décor to Mr. HUGH STEVENSON.

Intelligent imagination of this quality at work for children, without condescension or sentimentality, is about the rarest thing on earth, but now and then, praise be, it happens. ERIC.



## Day Nursery

**S**YMPSON had been demobilized only a week when he accepted the offer of a temporary job in the Muntion-on-Sea Council's milk-and-orange-juice for babies department. The job did not last very long, though he lost it in the end by becoming too popular with the babies rather than the reverse. Personally I should have expected them to scream their heads off at the sight of him, and I cannot understand who gave him the job in the first place, unless it was somebody with the same views about babies as King Herod.

After he had been there for a week I paid a visit to the department on some pretext just to see how he was getting on, and found that he seemed to be a highly popular figure not only with the babies but with the mothers as well. He was dangling a little fair-haired darling on his knee and discussing rickets with the mother as though he had made a study of the subject all his life.

I began to find the evenings unbearable, because Sympson had thrown his whole heart and soul into the job, and his conversation consisted almost entirely of babies, which he discussed by the hour. In Africa in the old days I used to get tired of Sympson's anecdotes about the Kugombas, but they were not nearly so bad as his stories about babies.

After he had been in the office for about a week, however, he took the fatal first step that at length ended in his undoing. A woman came in with a fat child named Maud, a perpetual dribbler with a glassy stare, and the mother said that she wanted to pop across the road to get a bit of fish, and would Sympson mind if she left Maud in his charge? She added that she was sure Maud would be as good as gold because she loved her kind Uncle Sympy-Wympy so much didn't she then, a dear.

Next morning she brought Maud in again while she popped across to get a bit of offal, and her friend Mrs. Gorge, also offal-hunting, said she was sure Mr. Sympson would not mind, at the same time, keeping an eye on her Alfie.

The tidings that the new gentleman at the orange-juicery was willing to look after babies while their mothers did the shopping naturally spread with alarming rapidity, and within a few days Sympson had six regular babies in his unofficial day nursery, besides others who dropped in occasionally.



NORMAN MANSBRIDGE

*"Coming ashore for a swim?"*

A week later the average had reached twelve, and the Inspector of Taxes on the floor below complained of the noise. Sympson invited him up, and over a friendly orange-juice the Inspector of Taxes admitted that he could make rabbits out of handkerchiefs.

This new attraction naturally increased rather than diminished business, and Sympson's Day Nursery would probably have gone on from strength to strength if the councillor who was chairman of the orange-juice-

and-extra-milk Standing Committee had not paid a visit one morning and found out what was going on. He told Sympson that the sooner he found another job the better he would be pleased, and Sympson took umbrage and put on his hat and walked out.

"And you can look after the babies yourself until their mothers come back," was his parting shot as he walked with dignity through the door. Then he tripped over one of the seven prams parked in the dark passage and fell headlong down the stairs.



"Now you see what happens if you don't practise."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### The Silver Sty

OUR age's conspicuous devotion to science has produced the atom bomb while art has been producing hardly anything at all. Freedom to create is hard to fit into the totalitarian state; and in proclaiming that scientists find freedom "a very troublesome concept" Dr. Waddington has presented a handsome platform for Mr. WILLIAM BOWYER HONEY's *Science and the Creative Arts* (FABER, 6/-). The author of this stimulating if rather superficial treatise is prepared to hand mankind over to the scientist, if he is allowed to fit in the "free culture" which is, for him, the final justification of our existence. By "free culture" he does not mean the creative life of the craftsman—a thing open to all; he means the affirmations and discoveries of artists and mystics. This is to be preserved by giving the infant artist his head while the rest of the class is handed over to the technical school. It sounds a trifle impracticable; especially as Mr. HONEY recognizes that the more directly you aim at mysticism the less likely you are to find it. If he were not so petulantly distrustful of the illuminating parallels of religion he might perhaps have made more headway with art. Probably the state's best gift to its élite is the one Diogenes begged of Alexander—to keep out of the light.

H. P. E.

### English Children

*Those Happy Days* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 7/6) is an anthology of English childhood from the Tudors down to 1914. Mr. HARTLEY KEMBALL COOK, its editor and author, for he contributes reminiscences of his own, has chosen his extracts with the skill of someone really interested in his subject, and the result is a delightful volume, the charm of which is heightened by Miss NORA UNWIN's attractive little decorations. There are of course many famous names in the volume, Lamb, Dickens, Goldsmith, Thackeray, Carlyle, Defoe and so on; but most of the extracts are from less familiar sources. There is, for example, the correspondence between a Cavalier knight and his wife about the ticklish problem of their infant's christening in 1647. "I pray, give noe offence to the State," wrote the knight, who was apparently anxious not to get into trouble with the Puritans and had indeed crossed over to France for that purpose. There is a glimpse into the nursery of a seventeenth-century Chancellor of the Exchequer, where there was "full liberty of drinking small beer as often as wee were inclined." There is Harriet Martineau's father soothing her anxious question what he would do if Boney came with—"Why, I will ask him to take a glass of port with me." And there is Charles Stewart Parnell glueing the feet of his toy soldiers to the floor, and by this stratagem gaining an overwhelming victory over the forces under the command of his sister, Fanny.

H. K.

### Low Thoughts on Low Living

There is something very satisfactory about the above title, the one Miss SHEILA KAYE-SMITH scrapped when she called her new book *Kitchen Fugue* (CASSELL, 8/6). For as a sub-acid comment on a country—perhaps, as she says, the only one in the world—which has made a merit of not taking good food seriously, and as an indictment of the "open-boat mentality" that squabbles over the remainder biscuit instead of starting to row, her book is really enjoyable and might have been even more so. As the story of a well-known novelist, who had never cooked the now so traditional egg, learning to cope with rations, it is less impressive. The censorious will urge that it is precisely the ladies who could not cook eggs who have sponsored the maidless kitchen. The incompetent mistress preceded the absentee maid. And unfortunately some of the author's cookery is less discerning than it need be, always excepting her admirable "Thirty Ways of Cooking (home-bred) Rabbit." Soup made of sieved cottage pie is her lowest ebb. But her refrigerator meals are, as she admits, pretty bogus. A refrigerator is cold comfort in a country house with next to no fuel. The seasonable touch, combined with appropriate thrift, would have been better indicated by a hay-box.

H. P. E.

### In Great Waters

*Wind Aloft, Wind Alow* (PETER DAVIES, 16/-) tells the story of two adventures—the single-handed crossing of the Atlantic, under sail in *The Winnibelle*, and under power in *The Arielle*, by Monsieur MARIN-MARIE, better known hitherto as a practical seaman and painter of sailing ships to the French Ministry of Marine. His book, since the translator (unnamed) has done well by him, proves that he can also write clear-cut and racy prose that combines technical description with a sense of romance and irony. He begins the book with an account of his early life in the Chausey Isles off the coast of Brittany where he sailed a boat of his father's that "could do everything but talk." The second voyage was made from New York to Chausey

and the first from Douarnenez to New York. The Bermudas "still vex" when he passed them, but greater dangers came later, when he remembered the rhyme, "If Bermudas let you pass, you must beware of Hatteras," as the crests of the waves came half-way up the mast and began a punishment that was to last for forty hours and give M. MARIN-MARIE what he describes as "an excellent chance to see how much a small boat can stand." It would be difficult to imagine a better book of its kind or one that combines so many qualities.

B. E. B.

### Russia and the Mongol Invasion

V. YAN'S *Batu-Khan* (HUTCHINSON INTERNATIONAL AUTHORS, 12/6) is the second volume in a trilogy describing the Mongol invasion of Russia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Batu-Khan, a grandson of Jenghiz Khan, appears to have inherited a large portion of his grandfather's organizing and military genius; and the author spares no pains to illustrate the truth of Napoleon's saying that these invasions were not the swarming irruption of a disorderly Asiatic rabble, but a deeply planned attack by an army whose military organization was much higher than that of its opponents. The result of the author's investigations into his country's past may interest readers with an appetite for this kind of thing—"Batu-Khan commanded a great pile of logs to be built up, and on this the body of the young khan Kulkan was laid. Together with him, the Mongols burnt alive forty of the loveliest young girls of Kolomna." But the ordinary reader will quickly weary of the bloodshed and torture with which the author so liberally provides him. The purpose of the book, according to its introduction, is to show that against the Mongols, as against Hitler, Russia defended not only herself but also European civilization; and, to underline this point, Batu-Khan threatens to stuff Bruges, Lübeck and Hamburg into his saddle-bag. The point would have been more convincingly made if the author had spared us some of the pages devoted to Russian valour and heroism in favour of a fleeting glimpse of Russian culture. H. K.

### Angler's Joy

*The Fisherman's Bedside Book* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 12/6) is a generous but pocketable miscellany compiled with much loving care by that old hand with both rod and pen, "B.B." If a visitor from the moon were to ask "What is fishing?" nothing better could be done than to shut him up for twenty-four hours with this excellent little book, in which are compressed those two quite different things, the pleasure of fishing and the pleasure of catching fish. The first is an inner joy of the spirit, compounded of many small innocent joys, the second a technical delight such as warms the hearts of all good craftsmen. There is no purist nonsense about "B.B." There are papers here on poaching—and what more fascinating subject?—and even one on shooting pike in Scotland with bow and arrows. He has cast far and wide to make a catholic selection, and besides passages from masters like Grey, Hudson, Thoreau, Jefferies and, of course, Walton, he includes many short pieces in prose and verse by humbler writers which cover coarse fish as well as game and also, if one may borrow a phrase, the whole waterfront. In addition he has had the bright idea of inviting the slayers of record fish to recount their classic adventures, some of which would stir envy in a saint. Far from the least interesting in the collection are contributions by "B.B." himself, and it is enriched by twenty lovely black-and-whites by D. J. Watkins-Pitchford. E. O. D. K.

### Between the Wars

The period between the two world-wars, with its conflicting loyalties and changing ideals, is one which presents almost limitless possibilities to the novelist. Lady PECK'S *There is a Fortress* (FABER, 8/6) has for its main theme the marriage of a romantically-minded girl and a sober, matter-of-fact, average, decent fellow, and the danger of its shipwreck as a result of the return into her life of her first love at a dangerous psychological moment. In itself of course the situation is one which is as old as fiction; but Lady PECK handles it with so much sincerity and courage that she gives it a fresh and stimulating claim on the reader's attention. Her characters are "live," her conversations natural, though one could wish that John Winter had been a little more careful in his quotations from his favourite poet Arnold, who did not, for instance, write "the white moon and the full evening star." C. F. S.

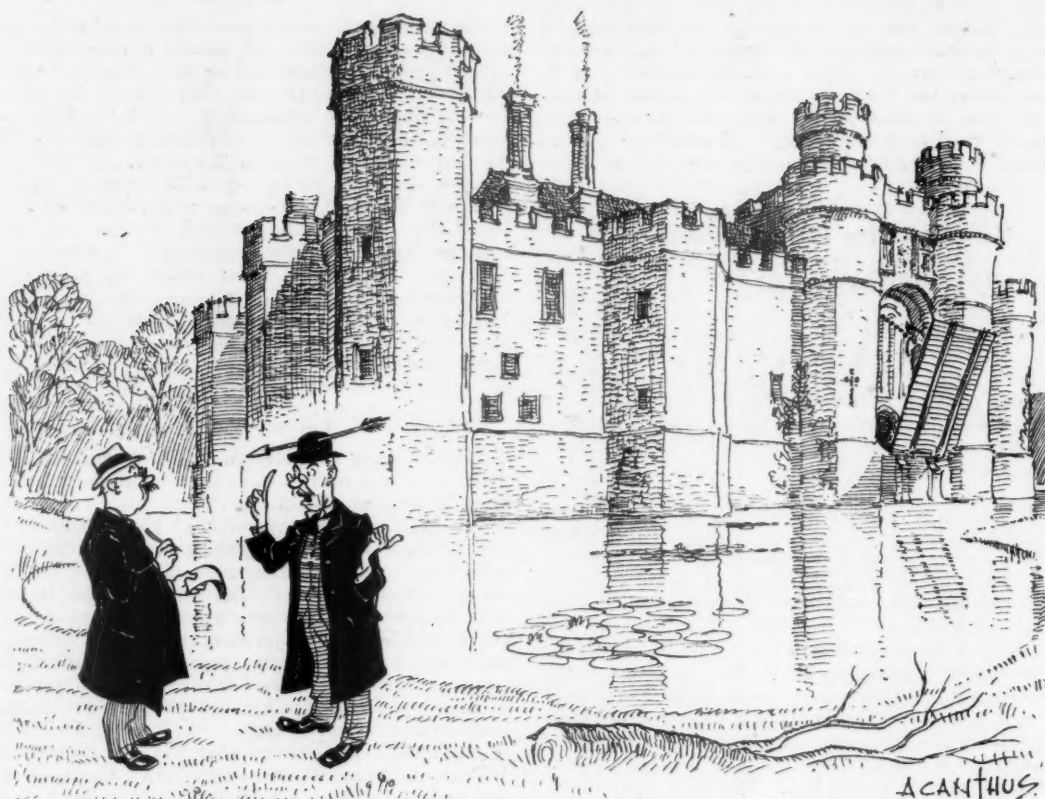
### Let the People Sing.

Dr. C. HENRY PHILLIPS, in *The Singing Church* (FABER, 21/-), gives us a bird's-eye view of the history of the music sung by English choirs and congregations since the days of St. Augustine. Compared with the ancient inheritance of the Gregorian chants, which Augustine probably brought with him, English church music as a native art is still in its adolescence. The Renaissance and the Reformation were its parents. In some respects the story of our native church music makes depressing reading, for after the great flowering of the sixteenth century it succumbed gradually to the metrical tyranny of the bar-line, to the detriment of words and music alike, and went into a decline from which it is only now emerging. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the tide turned with the advent of Stanford and Parry. Dr. PHILLIPS' learning and great love of his art are reflected on every page of his book, though, owing to the vastness of the subject, he is often scrappy and hard to follow. But it is a fascinating story that he tells.

D. C. B.







"They say they're tired of being requisitioned."

## Me and My Aunt

By Smith Minor

**I** THINK most of my gentel readers know that I have an aunt, but if they don't, or if they've forgotten, well, I have. As a matter of fact I've got several, but the one I mean is the one who isn't very well and who I once gave a parrot to.

For some reason I've never properly made out, nor can Green, this aunt likes me, and of course when poeple like you you generally like them back becorse (1) it seams mean not to, and (2) it's a pleasent surprize. Anyhow, I like this aunt back, and when she envites me to her house I always go if I can, even thouh, you can't get away from it, it's gloomby. You see, she's one of those poeple who live all alone, if you don't count parrots, in fact you might almost call her a she-hermet.

Well, a week ago, that is, it's a week ago wile I'm writing, but it will be a

bit more wile you're reading, anyhow, however long ago it was, she envited me to tea, saying she felt a little whobberly and neaded someone to chear her up, but there was also another reason wich she wuold tell me when I came. It was unforchunate she chose the day she did, becorse it was a day Green and I were going to practice standing on our heads, but whenever my aunt feels whobberly I go to her, so there was no help for it.

"What I can't understand," said Green, "is how you cuold chear anybody up."

"There are a few," I said, "thouh I grant there are more I give the pip to."

"That's what I was going to say," he said.

"I know," I said, "so I thort I'd get it in first."

"How do you chear her up?" he said.

"Well, you try diferent things," I said, "and if the first five don't do it, say, the sixth may."

"What sort of things?" he said.

"I'll read you my list for this time," I said, having alredy made it out, and this was it, i.e.:

(1) Reading alowd to her. Ideas. (a) "Three Men in a Boat." Note. It was written a long wile ago, but it's still funny. End of note. (b) "Quear Customs in East Africa," they being jolly quear. (c) "Hamlet." Keap off the newspapers.

(2) String tricks. I nearly always get them wrong, and that sometimes makes her laufh, thouh not always (make her laufh).

(3) Take her for an interesting walk, not too long, becorse she pants. You can make a walk interesting to others if you don't jest think, but talk about

the things you pass. If you don't pass any interesting things you can make them up, pretending they haven't seen them. This isn't strictly fair, but then it's in a good cause.

(4) Play games, letting her generally win. Not always, or she might find out. Ideas for games. (a) Draughts. (b) Spellikins. (c) Card games, easy ones. (d) Rolling marbels down a sloped board and seeing how far they go along the carpet, it's funny but she likes this, saying it's soothing. (e) Ask her to think of another game if I can't.

(5) Making shadows on the wall with your hands, like rabbits and things. Do her the set I've made up espeshully for her called "Ye Snail's Wedding," if I can remember it.

(6) Jest be cheerful.

Green thort it was a good list, but he said about "(1) (c)."

"I shuoldn't of thort 'Hamlet' was cheerful."

"I grant you, it isn't, much as one thinks of it," I said, "but you can't get away from it, it shows how much worse off other poeple can be than you, thouth mind you, I only read it to her as what's called a last resiorit."

He also said about "(2)":

"I thort you *always* got your string tricks wrong."

"Not when I do them to my aunt," I said, "becorse then I try to get them wrong, and sometimes by mistake I get them right."

"Well, young Smith," he said, "I hope you have a happy time."

"You don't hope that more than I do," I said. "I wish you were coming with me, Green, becorse then you cuold make your funny faces."

"Wuold they chear her up?" he said.

"They'd chear up a starving earwig," I said.

Note. Green wuold be worth knowing for any reason, but even if there wasn't any other reason, he'd be worth knowing for his funny faces. He can make two at once, diferent on both sides. End of note.

Well, came the day when I had to go and see her, and I went, hoping that if all went wrong, that other reason she'd written of for wanting to see me wuold

If I failed to make her smile,  
Yet make my visit worth our wile.

As soon as she opened the door to me I cuold see she neaded chearing, honestly I'd never seen her look gloombier, not even one time after she'd had three teeth out, and all of a suden wile I was taking off my coat and wiping my boots I thort of an idea that wasn't on my list. In a way you may

think I ouht to of thort of it before, but I'm a bit late with things like this. Anyhow, it was to find out the cause of her gloomb, and to see if one cuoldn't get rid of it. Of corse, if it isn't unkind to be *un peu* humorous for a moment, saying it is humorous, if it was more teath they wuold of alreddy of been got rid of.

Well, anyway, so I said,

"I'm sorry you don't feal exackly joyful, aunt. Cuold one know why?"

"Who wuold be joyful these days?" she said.

"One's got to try," I said.

"Yes, and wile you're trying down comes an Atom Bomb," she said.

"I see what you mean," I said.

"Well, shall we go for a walk?"

"You've jest taken off your coat," she said.

"I cuold put it on again," I said, "and there's jest time for a short one before tea. I past some very interesting things coming along."

"What were they?" she said.

"Well, one was a fiddeler with a monkey who looked a bit like Whinston Churchill, the fiddeler," I said. "If we're quick we might jest catch him."

"I knew you'd chear me," she said.

"Yes, we'll go for a walk."

Now if the gentel reader thinks this is an artickle where everything goes wrong, he or she is wrong him or herself. The extrdinary thing was that everything went right, not only the walk (thouh we didn't find the fiddeler), but the string tricks and the reading and the games and Ye Snail's Wedding, in fact, we did the lot. Honestly, she'd lost her gloomb in the first five minits, and she laufhed forty-

nine times, the forty-fifth time being so long that one got a bit anxciuous. This was at the one-before-last shadow of Ye Snail's Wedding, so I thort I'd better cut out the last. You don't acktually read it. It's jest of a very little snail.

Well, when it was nearly time to go, she sudenly got solenm, not gloomby, but, well, jest solenm, and she told me the other reason she'd wanted me to come. Things had gone so swimingly that, honesty, I'd forgotten all about it.

"Listen," she said, "now I've got something imporent to tell you."

"What is it?" I said.

"You'll never guess," she said.

"Are you going to get married?" I said.

"I'm serious," she said.

"Well, so was I," I said. "Why shuoldn't you? I know someone who married quite old, and it might chear you."

She got up and walked away, I thort it might of been to have another laufh, that wuold of been fifty, but it wasn't, and when she came back she said,

"No, it's this. I'm going to leave you all my money."

"My hat," I said. "How much will it be?"

"About six thousand pounds," she said.

"What?" I said.

"Six thousand pounds," she said.

"What?" I still said.

And she still said six thousand pounds (£6,000). So then I said, "Why?" but I won't put what she said to that becorse, well, it made me feal orkward.

Well, my head went round and



"There's no doubt about it—this is more popular than Art."

round, whose wuoldn't, why, even when one gets a pound it makes one dizzy, and I cuoldn't say anything more for a bit becorse I was working out what you cuold buy with six thousand pounds, for instence, twelve thousand cricket bats, or twenty-four thousand very good pen-knives, or forty-eiht thousand white mice, I knowing a man who sells them at half-a-croun each, honestly, it almost made you feal seasick.

But then a rather querious thing hapened. I don't quite know how to explane it, but I got a pickture of myself in the middle of forty-eiht thousand white mice, and they were all dead, becorse you see my aunt wuold have to be dead before I got them, saying I did, no, I can't explane it, but anyhow it stoped me fealing so pleased after all, and my aunt asked me what was the matter.

"If you don't mind," I said, "I'd rather you didn't."

"Why not?" she said, seaming surprized, like, I grant, one might.

"Well, you know what you've jest said about me," I said (i.e., the thing I cuoldn't print), "well, in a way I feal something like that about you, and, you can't get away from it, I'd hate to feal bucked when you died, that is, saying you did. It wuold be the same with old Green."

Then she got up and walked away again, like she had before, and when she came back she said,

"All right, we won't say any more about it."

"Oh, thank you!" I said, and, do

you know, I felt as if a great waight had been lifted off my mind!

We ended up with "Three Men in a Boat," each reading a page in turns, and another performance of Ye Snail's Wedding. This time I did the very little snail.

When I told Green afterwords, he said I was batts. But, mind you, he saw what I meant.

o o

## Explanatory Note

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—I take my pen in hand to explain my neglect of the literary arts during the last six or seven weeks but good lord the circumstances has been a bit out of my control I can assure you of that why come to think of it it is a modern marvel so-called that this little note is being penned at all and as for wooing the muses why good gracious it would perplex an eskimono.

Of course the cold snap we have had has been to blame and the fact that I am subsisting in diggings in this town gives me no *status quo* as it is said and no coal neither. My landlady and indeed all her relatives and family too feel the cold and it drives them to light a fire in the kitchen and the drawing-room where they are wont to huddle of an evening. Oft have they peeped in to my little den and passed remarks as to the warmth therin and how a fire would bake one but they are prone

to rosy spectacles of which I am not one.

When it got too cold and I was reduced to an old balaclava for fear of my ears my landlady entered one evening bearing a small oil stove which she had procured at a sale. She also presented me with fifteen sound reasons as to why no coal could be spared for my little den and a presumé of the national coal situation and hers in particular also injunctions to go easy with the oil as it was like gold only rarer.

But good lord this stove is a real boon to me and with a little imagination one can nearly transport oneself back to the good old feudal days and fires roaring in open hearths just fancy what I dream as I gaze at the flickering flames glowing through the little bit of red glass in the side of the stove, good heavans a magic carpet is not to be compared. Sometimes the fumes seem to get a bit oppressive and an ancient aspidistra has since wilted but what of this, one can always open a window if one so desires.

Sometimes too there has been large oily smuts emerging from the top of the cylinder which tend to settle on white objects, but this is of little moment as there are few white objects in here and with a little study of the wick regulator one may keep them under control.

Well sir I must tear myself away I can smell flames and must see to them hoping that this letter find you in the pink I am sir yours truly

M. W. SMUGG.



"George, the Robinsons are just immediately behind us—keep very quiet and they won't notice us in the dark."

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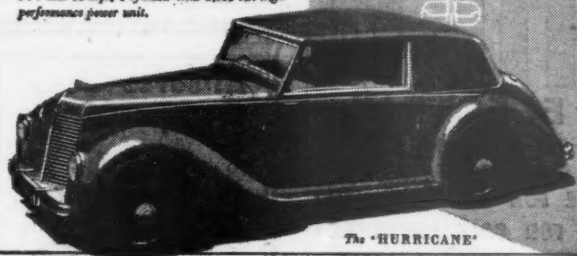
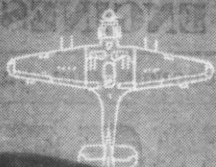
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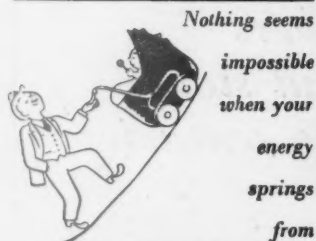
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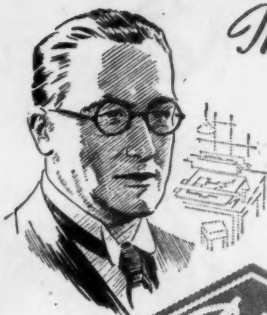


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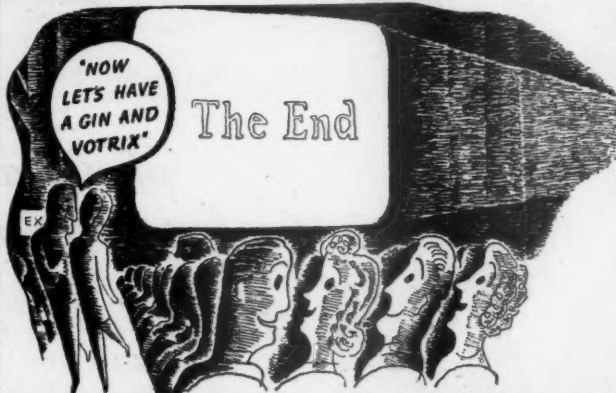
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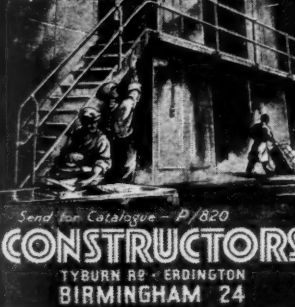
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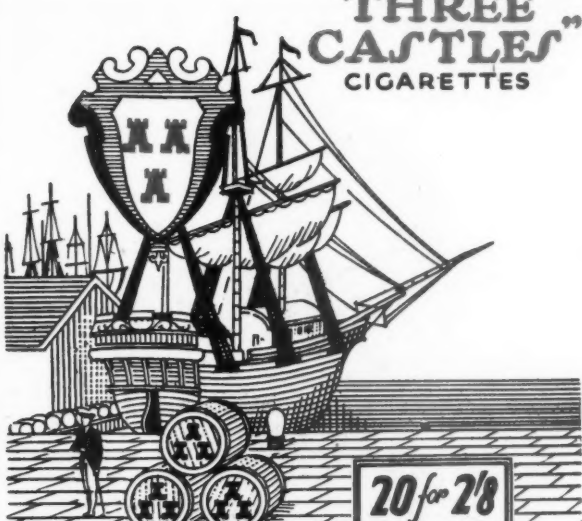
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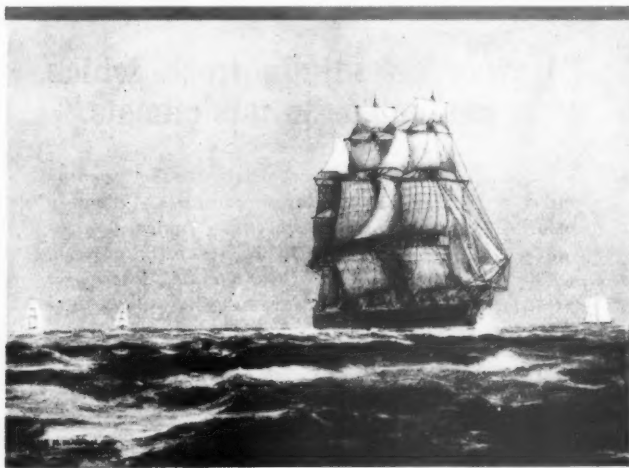
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